

Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
Meeting Minutes
December 20, 2011

A meeting of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC) was held on December 20, 2011, at the American Legion Building, 1708 Commonwealth Avenue, Richmond.

Members Present

- Jeffrey Platte, Air Force Association
- George Coker, American Ex-POWs
- Brett Reistad, American Legion
- Bruce Brown, AMVETS
- Don Kaiserman, Association of the United States Army
- David Martinez, Disabled American Veterans
- James Jones, Korean War Veterans Association
- Bruce Steele, Marine Corps League
- Robert Fairchild, Military Order of the Purple Heart
- William Townsley, Military Order of the World Wars
- Thomas Moran, National Association for Uniformed Services
- Frank Driscoll, Navy Seabee Veterans of America
- Matthew Dailey, Non Commissioned Officers Association
- David Coffield, Paralyzed Veterans of America
- Carmen Gentile, Reserve Officers Association
- Nolan Jackson, Roanoke Valley Veterans Council
- Daniel Boyer, Veterans of Foreign Wars
- George Corbett, Vietnam Veterans of America
- Michael Coleman, Virginia National Guard Association
- Jenny Holbert, Women Marines Association
- Thad Jones, Chairman, Board of Veterans Services
- Rich Schollman, Veterans Services Foundation
- Paul Galanti, Commissioner of Veterans Services

Members Absent

- Abe Zino, Fleet Reserve Association
- Roger Dimsdale, Legion of Valor
- Raymond Edwards, Military Officers Association of America

Alternates Present (representing their VSO)

- Stu Williams, Military Officers Association of America

Alternates Present (not representing their VSO)

- Ed Dauksz, AUSA

Commonwealth of Virginia Officials Present

- Delegate Richard Anderson, Virginia House of Delegates
- Brandon deGraff, Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security
- Cindy Norwood, Office of the Attorney General
- Karen Grimm, Department of Motor Vehicles
- Rick Holcomb, Department of Motor Vehicles
- Matt Weld, Department of Motor Vehicles
- Jon Hatfield, Virginia War Memorial
- Anne Atkins, Department of Veterans Services
- Steven Combs, Department of Veterans Services
- Jack Hilgers, Department of Veterans Services
- Martha Mead, Department of Veterans Services
- Judy Reid, Department of Veterans Services
- Martha Utley, Department of Veterans Services
- Matthew Wade, Department of Veterans Services
- Annie Walker, Department of Veterans Services
- Danielle Weaver, Department of Veterans Services
- Cathy Wilson, Department of Veterans Services

Others Present

- George Abbitt, Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Tom Anderson, Virginia Veterans Coalition
- John Bonnell, Marine Corps League, JLC retired
- Joe Carr, Virginia Veterans Coalition
- Richard Fallen, Veterans of Foreign Wars
- James Hancock, Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Roger Sullivan, Virginia Veterans Coalition

Agenda Packet

- Agenda (Agenda Item II)
- Proposed corrections to the minutes of the November 9, 2011 JLC meeting (Agenda Item III)
- Presentations (Agenda Item IV)
 - Overview of Governor McDonnell's proposed budget
 - PowerPoint slides
 - Excerpt from the Executive Budget Document
 - DVS Education Services
 - PowerPoint slides
 - Handout titled "Veterans Retraining Assistance Program"
- Reports (Agenda Item V)
 - Legislative Procedures Committee

- Recommendation 6
 - Patron Recommendation Process
- Board of Veterans Services Report
- Veterans Services Foundation Report
- Department of Veterans Services Report
- Interstate Compact Report
- Old Business (Agenda Item VI)
 - JLC Appointed Officers – nominated by Chair Holbert
 - JLC 2012 Meeting Schedule
 - Veterans Remembered Flag
 - JLC branding (PowerPoint Slides)
- New Business (Agenda Item VII)
 - JLC Conference at the General Assembly
 - Notional Schedule
 - Coordinating Instructions
 - Sign-up Sheet
 - JLC 2012 Action Plan - Proposed

Opening and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Jenny Holbert called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and asked Mr. David Martinez to lead the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call of VSOs and Quorum Determination

The roll was called, and 20 of the 23 Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) represented on the JLC were recorded as being represented and a quorum was determined. Thad Jones, the Chairman of the Board of Veterans Services, Mr. Rich Schollman, representing the Veterans Services Foundation, and Paul Galanti, the Commissioner of Veterans Services, were recorded as present. Mr. Frank Driscoll joined the meeting about 10:10 a.m., bringing the total of VSOs represented to 21.

Approval of the agenda

Chair Holbert asked for a **motion** to approve the agenda (*Attachment 1*) as presented. Mr. David Coffield made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Thomas Moran. The agenda was approved **unanimously**.

Introductions of Guests

Chair Holbert asked that guests and staff introduce themselves. Their names and organizations are recorded above. Chair Holbert welcomed them to the meeting.

Review and Approval of November 9, 2011 meeting minutes

Chair Holbert stated that the minutes from the November 9, 2011 meeting had been distributed electronically.

Mr. William Townsley reviewed a proposed correction to page 9 of the November 9, 2011 minutes (*Attachment 2*).

Chair Holbert asked for a **motion** to approve the November 9, 2011 minutes with the proposed correction. Mr. Moran made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Brett Reistad. The November 9, 2011 minutes with the proposed correction were approved by **unanimous consent**.

Presentations

Overview of Governor McDonnell's proposed budget

Mr. Steven Combs reviewed the JLC, BVS, and other Budget and Legislative Initiatives proposed by Governor Bob McDonnell for the 2012 General Assembly using a PowerPoint presentation (*Attachment 3*). He covered the four recommendations made by the JLC, the six recommendations made by the BVS, the Governor's recommendations in response to these, and other Governor's initiatives. He concluded with the Governor's proposed budget savings.

Mr. David Coffield stated that the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) would not support the separation of the two hunting and fishing licenses. It is very difficult for PVA members to apply for the current one and separating the two would require two separate examinations. This would be an unwanted burden on handicapped veterans. Mr. Combs stated that he would help put the PVA in touch with the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) to discuss this issue.

Mr. Frank Driscoll stated that he read in the newspaper today that VDVS is opening a new benefit office in Virginia Beach. Mr. Combs confirmed the announcement and stated that the office became fully operational as of yesterday. He said that Commissioner Paul Galanti would review new office openings during his report.

Mr. Combs concluded by briefly reviewing the section from Governor McDonnell's budget under the Office of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security.

Veterans ID Card

Commissioner Galanti introduced Commissioner Rick Holcomb of the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Commissioner Holcomb thanked the Council for allowing him to address the members. He reviewed several initiatives that DMV is pursuing. One is defining the role of DMV in the military/veteran's community. More than 800,000 veterans live in this state along with numerous active duty military personnel. They are a large portion of DMV's customers and need to be considered in DMV's services.

Commissioner Holcomb explained the mobile customer services centers and how they could benefit the military and veterans communities. DMV currently has two mobile units in operation and two more coming on board. One will be based in Richmond, one in Portsmouth, one in Roanoke, and one in Northern Virginia. These are full service units that are handicapped accessible and can do all DMV transactions. As of January 2012, DMV will be partnering with DGIF selling hunting and fishing licenses. The mobile units routinely visit Fort Lee, and more recently Quantico, and DMV is initiating a monthly service to these locations. The units have also been to Langley Air Force Base and Fort Eustis. DMV currently is trying to get these units into Fort Belvoir. In November, the units were in Salem for the homeless veterans stand-down which is designed to help homeless veterans get back on their feet.

DMV is working through the U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs office and the three Veterans Affairs Medical Centers in Virginia to try and use those centers as residences for Homeless Veterans. This is necessary because the law requires that all citizens must have an address in order to apply for an ID or Driver's License.

The DMV has had a great partnership with the Pentagon for 37 years. They have provided DMV with office space at no cost to the Commonwealth. This office is a fully operational DMV office and has been a great help in establishing DMV at Fort Lee.

DMV is also in the early stages of a program called "*Troops-to-Trucks*." This program is organized to help active military with a military commercial license to leave the military and exchange their military commercial license for a civilian commercial license. DMV hopes to roll this out in July 2012.

DMV is developing a separate Veterans ID because everything on a Virginia Driver's License has to be authenticated in a timely fashion. If this cannot be done electronically, it will cause unacceptable delays that could put DMV offices at a standstill. Verifying DD214s electronically with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) is not possible. Neither is verification through Department of Defense sources. However, DMV has the statutory authority to develop a separate ID Card. DMV can use the DD214 and a confirming piece of identification to issue an ID Card. The ID will cost \$10. Commissioner Holcomb circulated a draft design of the ID Card for the members to see what one would look like. DMV hopes to have these ID's available by Memorial Day. If DMV already has your DD214 on file because you have shown it to get a license plate, for example, you may go on-line to obtain an ID.

Several members were concerned about the cost. It was pointed out that using the card to get discounts at stores would more than offset the low cost. Mr. Driscoll questioned the cost of processing the \$10 fee. He said that studies have shown that it could cost about \$350 to process a \$10 fee. Commissioner Holcomb said that he appreciated the information and would take it under consideration. He thanked the JLC members for their understanding and support.

DVS Education Services

Ms. Annie Walker, Director of the State Approving Agency (SAA), provided a PowerPoint presentation on Education Services, noting that SAA is the only organization in Virginia that approves educational programs so veterans and their dependents may receive their educational benefits. She covered SAA's mission, staffing, operations and their growth, the GI Bill's economic impact, and future plans.

Ms. Walker said that SAA's funding remains stable under the Post 9/11 GI Bill. SAAs nationwide are federally funded and will receive \$19 million annually for 10 years to be dispersed between the 50 states and Puerto Rico.

Ms. Walker briefly covered the "Veterans Retraining Assistance Program" and concluded her remarks.

Chair Holbert called for a break at 11:00 am. Chair Holbert called the meeting back to order at 11:15 am.

Reports

Legislative Procedures Committee

Mr. Thomas Moran delivered the Legislative Procedures Committee report to the Council. He explained that the Committee Chair, Mr. Abe Zino, was unable to attend today's meeting.

Mr. Moran covered JLC Legislative Procedures Committee Recommendation 6 (Attachment 4). Mr. Moran explained that the recommendation provides guidance on how to maintain a distinct difference between JLC objectives and other veterans-related legislation proposed by legislators. He said that the recommendation is self explanatory and asked if there were any questions. No questions were posed.

Mr. Moran reviewed the other Procedures Committee proposal that contains procedures for recommending patrons to the Governor's office for JLC and BVS legislative objectives, which now are called initiatives. The material contained in the Patron Recommendation Procedures (Attachment 5) is a condensation of several procedures that the JLC has used in the past and should be familiar to most all members and Mr. Moran asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Mr. Moran made a **motion** to approve the JLC Legislative Procedures Committee Recommendation 6 and the JLC Legislative Procedures Committee Patron Recommendation Process as presented, **seconded** by Mr. William Townsley. The motion was approved **unanimously**.

Mr. Jeff Platte commented on developing a matrix to track JLC legislative initiatives over the years. Chair Holbert stated that a spreadsheet was developed about a year ago that tracked legislative initiatives since about 2007 or 2008 that can be updated. Mr. Combs said that the spreadsheet is available and can be updated to reflect the current initiatives with those presented over the years. Mr. Moran stated that the Legislative Procedures Committee will take this initiative and have the matrix ready for the next JLC meeting.

Board of Veterans Services

Board of Veterans Services (BVS) Chairman Thad Jones delivered the BVS report (Attachment 6). He provided an overview of the stats of BVS legislative initiatives. He said that the next meeting will be on January 9, 2012. He stated that they have received a copy of the JLC Annual Report. He then thanked the JLC for their support and DVS for the outstanding staff assistance given to BVS and JLC over the past years. Mr. Jones mentioned that he must leave before the meeting will conclude today.

Veterans Services Foundation

Mr. Rich Schollmann delivered the Veterans Services Foundations (VSF) Board of Trustees report (Attachment 7). He noted that there is a detailed report of donors attached to the report. VSF met in November and will not meet again until March 2012. He then stated that the

Foundation raised over \$111,000 of which \$104,000 is for VWWP. This is a 50% increase from last year.

Department of Veterans Services

Commissioner Paul Galanti summarized the DVS report (*Attachment 8*).

- Benefit Services just opened two new offices in Alexandria and Virginia Beach.
- Ms. Walker's presentation earlier on the SAA was very informative and the handout she presented should be of value to the VSOs.
- Care Centers operates on non-general, that is non-taxpayer, funds. One of the new BVS members, Mr. Don Lecky, President of Westminster Canterbury Richmond, visited Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center (SBVCC) and was very impressed with the facility.
- The cemetery in Suffolk has something going on almost every day. The Amelia cemetery operations tempo is a little slower, but is an asset to the community.
- Virginia Wounded Warrior Program Executive Director, Cathy Wilson, has made great strides in making the very negative aspects of PTSD and traumatic brain injury acceptable.
- DVS now has a new Human Resources Director, Jeff McMahan.

Chair Holbert asked if there is anything that the JLC can do to support DVS with their Human Resources needs for positions and/or funding. Mr. Combs commented that there are several positions that are authorized and unfilled. DVS is waiting on approval from the Governor's office to move forward with hiring. Mr. Combs stated that there is a temporary hiring freeze on right now. As soon as this freeze is lifted from the Governor's office DVS can move forward to fill these positions. Mr. Combs suggested that the JLC maintain its awareness of this critical subject and ask for reports at future meetings.

Mr. David Martinez inquired about the County Veterans Service Office Liaison position. He stated that he knows that this position was approved and has not been filled. He wanted to know what county was picked to start this program in. Commissioner Galanti stated one had not been picked yet. This idea generated from Senator Stosch. Commissioner Galanti thought that Henrico County would have been selected. Mr. Martinez stated that the County Veterans Service Office was supposed to be a pilot program and if it worked then the county would pick up the cost. Even though this position is not funded Mr. Martinez wanted to keep this initiative alive. Commissioner Galanti assured the Council that this initiative is very high priority.

Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (VWWP)

Ms. Wilson, Executive Director, thanked the Council for its ongoing support. She stated that in the short time that she has been with DVS, three years now, the leadership, Commissioner, Mr. Combs and Senior Staff have come together as a team in support of VWWP. Ms. Walker has worked with VWWP as they go forward educating and reaching out to veterans of any era that need rehabilitative support and other services. For the first time ever, the VWWP is fully staffed. She said that the VWWP team will be releasing a progress report in January for this past year. This will give the Council the opportunity to review the results of their service to veterans and their families. Iraq now has wound down and a significant number of troops coming back home will need jobs and may have rehabilitation issues that need help. VWWP is absolutely committed to servicing our military veterans.

She then introduced Mr. Matthew Wade who is the new Regional Director for Region III. Mr. Wade spoke to the Council and briefly described his background and his position with VWWP. Mr. Wade stated that when he saw the opening with VWWP for the Region III Director this gave him the opportunity to go back home to Southwestern Virginia. He was raised in Christiansburg.

Ms. Wilson then introduced Ms. Martha Utley who is the new Regional Director for Region IV. Ms. Wilson stated that Ms. Utley was the first female E-9 in the Coast Guard. Ms. Utley addressed the Council and briefly described her background and her position with VWWP. She stated that her background is in the medical field and that she is a native of Richmond.

Ms. Wilson concluded by stating that they continue to seek funds from all sources to assist VWWP and noted that her staff spends months getting to veterans who need help.

Virginia Military Advisory Council

Mr. Jeff Platte, JLC Representative to the Virginia Military Advisory Council (VMAC) stated that there has been no meeting therefore he had no report. The next meeting will be in the spring of 2012.

Interstate Compact

Mr. Moran reviewed the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children meeting report he submitted (*Attachment 9*). He stated that this is a federal program designed to level the playing field regarding differing academic requirements in grades k-12 between states. He noted that Virginia, in the educational world, is a leader amongst other states. However, there still is great concern about the young school children transferring in and out of Virginia and making sure that the credits, schooling and education are where they should be. Most states have no working agreements and it is the goal of the Compact to rectify this problem.

Virginia War Memorial

Mr. Jon Hatfield, Virginia War Memorial (VWM) Executive Director, thanked the JLC members for their support. The Memorial is looking forward to closer ties with DVS which will assist the Memorial with a lot of administration. The Memorial is closing the year with a strong record. Attendance is up. The educational program has 16 documentary films that are being used throughout Virginia by educational institutions. The Memorial is also finishing the year with a record number of students coming to see and learn about military history.

On December 4 President Franklin Delano Roosevelt came to the Memorial. Pearl Harbor Day was a record for attendance to the Memorial. Four Pearl Harbor survivors attended.

Mr. Hatfield invited the Council to pass the word to the VSOs that on Saturday, January 14, 2012 from 10 a.m. until noon a couple of experts on military memorabilia will be at the Memorial. This event will be very similar to the Antiques Roadshow. If you have an item at home and would like to know what it is, please bring it by.

Mr. Bruce Steeley asked about the Iraq conflict and if it is official over. Mr. Hatfield stated that the General Assembly will let the Memorial know when they can place names on the wall after a conflict has ended.

Mr. Carmen Gentile stated that he had the opportunity to go to the Memorial on December 4 and meet President Roosevelt. Mr. Gentile said that if anyone has the opportunity to go to one of these events that it is very educational and entertaining. He congratulated Mr. Hatfield on the Memorial's successes.

Mr. Hatfield stated that they are in negotiations with President Harry S. Truman to visit the Memorial during 2012.

Chair Holbert recognized that Mr. Jones and Mr. Bruce Brown had to leave the meeting early.

Chair Holbert called for a lunch break at 12:00 pm. Chair Holbert called the meeting back to order at 12:30 pm.

Chair Holbert thanked the VFW for paying for today's meal

Old Business

Approve JLC Appointed Officers

Chair Holbert reviewed the appointed officers:

- Legislative Officer/Chair of the Legislative Operations Committee: Brett Reistad
- Assistant Legislative Officer/Chair of the Legislative Procedures Committee: Abe Zino
- Chair of the Constitution & By-Laws Committee: Pete Fairchild
- Chair of the Nominating Committee: Dan Boyer
- JLC Representative to the Virginia Military Advisory Council: Jeff Platte
- JLC Representative to the Virginia Council on the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children: Chip Moran
- Chaplain: George Corbett

Chair Holbert asked for a **motion** to approve the appointed officers. Mr. Townsley made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Matthew Dailey. The appointed officers were approved by **unanimous consent**.

Approve 2012 meeting schedule

Chair Holbert then reviewed the proposed 2012 meeting schedule:

- Thursday, January 12: JLC Conference at the General Assembly
- Wednesday, March 28
- Wednesday, May 23
- Wednesday, July 11
- Wednesday, October 17

- Wednesday, December 19 or Thursday, December 20 (depending on the release of the Governor's budget)
- Thursday, January 10, 2013: JLC Conference at the General Assembly

Chair Holbert asked for a **motion** to approve the 2012 meeting schedule. Mr. Frank Driscoll made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. David Coffield. The 2012 meeting schedule was approved by **unanimous consent**.

Veterans Remembered Flag

Mr. Combs addressed the Council on the Veterans Remembered Flag (*Attachment 10*). He pointed out that at the last JLC meeting this initiative was presented and tabled. The Governor's office had received a request from an organization in California that is proposing a creation of a Veterans Remembered Flag. The organization is contacting each State's Governor for a proclamation and is requesting that the Governor of Virginia issue a proclamation of support for the flag. The Governor's office has asked that DVS to get the JLC recommendation for approval or disapproval. The Council discussed the proposal and the consensus was that the main veterans flag is the U.S. Flag.

Mr. Moran **recommended** that the JLC not support this proposal at this time. Mr. Driscoll seconded the **recommendation**. There was no further discussion on the subject.

Review status of JLC 2011 - 2012 Initiatives

Mr. Reistad reviewed the four JLC 2012 initiatives for the General Assembly and what was revealed in last night's conference call hosted by Secretary Suit. He stated that no action is needed at this time on the JLC recommendations, except perhaps updating the position papers.

- #1 - Veterans Identification: this initiative will be presented as an administrative initiative. DMV will move forward. The position paper needs to be redone. No patron will be needed.
- #2 - Unclaimed Cremains: legislative objective recommended to the Governor has been approved. The funeral homes will have to provide the names to DVS for the unclaimed cremains and then DVS will have to verify who are veterans. Mr. John Bonnell stated that if the cremains come from the Sheriff's office, they will be reimbursed by the State. If the family refuses to claim the cremains, then the cremains will be considered abandoned.
- #3 - Sales Tax Exemption for 501(c)(19) VSOs: The Governor does not support this initiative for the reasons stated by Mr. Combs. Mr. Dan Boyer wants to see this initiative stay as an education piece for the General Assembly. The Governor is receptive to this initiative but the funding is not available this year. Delegate Rich Anderson stated that this initiative is valid for discussion and education.
- #4 - Homeless Veterans: JLC recommended the Governor implement as many strategies to reduce Homelessness among veterans. It was proposed as a resolution to the Governor who adopted it and provided funding. The point paper needs to be revised to reflect this.

Mr. Reistad made a **motion** to adopt these results and retain the sales tax issue to be included in the packet presented to the legislators as an information item for future consideration, **seconded** by Mr. Coffield. The recommendations were approved by **unanimous consent**.

Mr. Driscoll asked about the Governor's budget and the possibility of a legislator picking up on the VSO sales tax issue. Mr. Jack Hilgers stated that this is not an appropriations committee issue, but rather is a finance committee issue because it negatively affects revenue. As in the past, the leadership will probably place a moratorium on all revenue reducing legislation. The sales tax legislation will not be unique and will meet the same fate as all revenue reducing legislation.

Chair Holbert recapped that the motion that was just passed which retained the sales tax issue as an information item. Discussion proceeded on the merits of the sales tax initiative and the need for another motion.

Mr. Combs suggested one other alternative. With the packet of position papers will be a cover sheet labeled "JLC 2011/2012 initiatives." The four initiatives can be broken down into four categories: (1) a legislative initiative; (2) budget initiatives; (3) an administrative initiative; and (4) an initiative deferred to the 2012/2013 General Assembly. This method keeps the item on the sheet as a future year initiative. He said that the DVS staff would work on this.

Chair Holbert asked Delegate Anderson if he had any further comments. Delegate Anderson commented that:

- Number one consideration is that the composition of the General Assembly after November 8th provides increased interest in the military and veteran's community because the House of Delegates now has a retired 30 year Marine Colonel – Delegate Dudenhefer, a 30 year retired Air Force Colonel – Delegate Anderson, a 30 year retired Army Colonel – Delegate Lingamfelter, and a Naval Academy graduate, who was a nuclear engineer and spent about 21 years retiring as a Navy medical doctor – Delegate Stolle.
- Number two, we have begun the nucleus of forming a Military-Veterans Caucus and are in the organizational phase. The Caucus will meet every two weeks and will consist of members of both political parties. They will have DVS support. The JLC, BVS, DVS staff, and Secretary Suit's office have a standing invite. He said that Secretary Suit also has indicated that she would like to use the Caucus as a sounding board.
- Number three is that he, Delegate Anderson, is a relative newcomer and has starting his third session as a legislator. Without the JLC, he cannot move legislation forward, take initiatives, and support Governor McDonnell's initiative to make this the number one most Veteran Friendly State.

Delegate Anderson thanked the JLC for their efforts. He invited everyone to stop by his office during the General Assembly session. He will be in room 406 in the General Assembly Building. Chair Holbert would like for a member of the JLC to attend the Caucus meetings. Delegate Anderson is the proposed chair for the caucus. He will also leave business cards for anyone who needs one.

Mr. Reistad stated that the JLC needs to follow through on the both the JLC and BVS initiatives in the General Assembly with the JLC VSOs that are sponsors of these initiatives. He hopes to be available to attend the necessary committees meetings.

Mr. Reistad reminded everyone that the Unclaimed Creamins is sponsored by the Marine Corps League with the Military Order of World Wars, Sales and Use Tax by the VFW, Reducing Veteran Homelessness by MOAA, Veterans designation of Drivers License by NAUS. The initiatives by the BVS which include the Delivery of Benefits Service by the Vietnam Veterans of America, Education Service Staffing by MOAA, Care Center Staffing by the Military Order of the Purple Heart, and Hampton Roads Veterans Care Center Pre-planning study by DAV

Mr. Reistad suggested that going into next year the JLC should begin considering legislative initiatives and going back to the respective VSOs and getting them fully involved. The American Legion has a process for this. The initiatives begin at the Post level and then forward to the convention in July. July will be too late for Mr. Reistad to make recommendations to the JLC, therefore, VSO will have to start early and have their initiatives solidified by July.

Mr. Don Kaiserman added that at the last meeting the JLC needs to get the legislative initiatives moving a little bit faster and make certain that there is enough time to get the position papers put together. We will have to be prepared to start talking to General Assembly members earlier because it will not be an election year. Please submit legislative initiatives as soon as possible.

JLC Branding

Ms. Anne Atkins reviewed the JLC Branding presentation. The committee members are Ms. Holbert, Mr. Bruce Steeley, Mr. George Coker, and Mr. Nolan Jackson. She went into detail on each issue involved in developing a visual identity and ending with the essential considerations that the JLC:

- Is a unified voice for Virginia's veterans;
- Ensures veterans get what they've earned and are entitled to;
- Represents its stakeholders to bring veterans' issues to the forefront;
- Is unique because of its united voice for all veterans in the Commonwealth; and
- Is the strongest veteran's advocacy group in the Commonwealth.

Ms. Atkins asked the Council to please review the information in her presentation and if there are any questions or suggestions to please contact one of the committee members or herself. She would like for these comments to be forward by January 2, 2012. She will then share this brief with the logo designer. She hopes that samples will be completed by March 2012 and a finished product by July 2012.

Chair Holbert then brought up the subject of changing the Council's name. She did receive several comments since the last JLC meeting that they thought this was a good idea. The Council discussed this initiative and several strengths and weaknesses were identified.

Mr. Townsley made a **motion** to hold a straw vote on consideration to change the JLC name, **seconded** by Mr. Moran. The motion was approved by **unanimous consent**.

Chair Holbert then asked for a show of hands regarding changing the name of the JLC. A vote was taken with Five Yeas and Seven Nays. The Chair declared that JLC name change was no longer under consideration and asked to move on to New Business.

New Business

Prepare for JLC Conference at the General Assembly

Mr. Hilgers reviewed the Notional Schedule for the Conference and noted that it is subject to change. He then covered the Coordinating Instructions and asked all present to complete the Sign-Up Sheet.

Approve 2012 Action Plan

Chair Holbert reviewed the proposed JLC 2012 Action Plan.

Mr. Combs suggested one change to the Action Plan. NLT May 1 – *NOTE: JLC Position Paper format recommended, but not required* needs to be changed to *NOTE: Must be in JLC Position Paper format*.

Chair Holbert also stated that they are considering asking the Governor to review with the JLC the results of the initiatives that had come before the General Assembly after the General Assembly has reconvened. The October 17 meeting was moved up so that the JLC can get an earlier start on their initiatives with legislators. Mr. Combs stated that requests for meetings with the Governor need to be submitted several months ahead of the scheduled meeting date and that the Governor may not approve the meeting date until two weeks before the meeting.

Chair Holbert proposed that the JLC add to the March 28 meeting a recap of past initiatives, and no later than May 1 that the JLC position papers be in the proper format.

Mr. Townsley made a **motion** to approve the JLC 2012 Action Plan with the proposed changes, **seconded** by Mr. Moran. The motion was approved by **unanimous consent**. The approved 2012 JLC Action Plan is shown as *Attachment 11*.

Public Comment

Chair Holbert asked if there were any public comments.

Mr. Roger Sullivan addressed the Council with several questions. Mr. Sullivan stated that Mr. Martinez brought up the subject on the County Veterans Service Office Liaison. Mr. Sullivan would like to know if the Governor or DVS eliminated this position. Chair Holbert stated that she will have to respond back at a later time with the answer.

Mr. Sullivan next asked about the status of the TurboVet project.

Mr. Sullivan followed by asking how the approval rating of 75% for disability claims was determined.

Mr. Townsley asked if the Council could be forwarded these answers as well.

Chair Holbert said that these issues would be researched and a response provided.

Closing remarks

Chair Holbert thanked everyone for everything they have been doing for the JLC and Virginia's veterans and their families. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Adjournment

Chair Holbert adjourned the meeting at 1:47 p.m.

ATTACHMENT 1

**Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations
American Legion Building
1708 Commonwealth Avenue, Richmond
December 20, 2011
10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.**

- I. Opening and Pledge of Allegiance – *Jenny Holbert, JLC Chair* (10:00 – 10:05)
- II. Roll call of VSOs, quorum determination, approval of agenda and introduction of guests – *Jenny Holbert, JLC Chair* (10:05 – 10:10)
- III. Approve November 9, 2011 meeting minutes – *Jenny Holbert, JLC Chair* (10:10 – 10:15)
- IV. Presentations (10:15 – 10:55)
 - a. Overview of Governor McDonnell’s proposed budget –*Steven Combs, Director of Policy & Planning* (15 minutes)
 - b. Veterans ID Card – *Rick Holcomb, Commissioner, Department of Motor Vehicles* (15 minutes)
 - c. DVS Education Services – *Annie Walker, Director, State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training* (10 minutes)

Break (10:55 – 11:05)

- V. Reports (11:05 – 12:00)
 - a. Legislative Procedures Committee – *Abe Zino, Committee Chair* (10 minutes)
 - b. Board of Veterans Services – *Thad Jones, BVS Chairman* (5 minutes)
 - c. Veterans Services Foundation – *David Holt, VSF Chairman* (5 minutes)
 - d. Department of Veterans Services – *Paul Galanti, Commissioner* (10 minutes)
 - e. Virginia Wounded Warrior Program – *Cathy Wilson, Executive Director; Matthew Wade, Region III Director; Martha Utley, Region IV Director* (10 minutes)
 - f. Virginia Military Advisory Council – *Jeff Platte, JLC Representative* (5 minutes)
 - g. Interstate Compact – *Chip Moran, JLC Representative* (5 minutes)
 - h. Virginia War Memorial – *Jon Hatfield, Executive Director* (5 minutes)

Lunch (12:00 – 12:30)

- VI. Old business (12:30 – 1:10)
 - a. Approve JLC Appointed Officers – *Jenny Holbert, JLC Chair* (5 minutes)
 - b. Approve 2012 meeting schedule – *Jenny Holbert, JLC Chair* (5 minutes)
 - c. Veterans Remembered Flag – *Steven Combs, Director of Policy & Planning* (5 minutes)

- d. Review status of JLC 2011-2012 Initiatives – *Brett Reistad, Legislative Officer* (20 minutes)
 - e. JLC branding: *Anne Atkins, Director of Communications* (5 minutes)
- VII. New business (1:10 – 1:20)
 - a. Prepare for JLC Conference at the General Assembly – *Jack Hilgers, Development Director* (5 minutes)
 - b. Approve 2012 Action Plan – *Jenny Holbert, JLC Chair* (5 minutes)
- VIII. Public comment period (1:20 – 1:25)
- IX. Closing remarks – *Jenny Holbert, JLC Chair* (1:25 – 1:30)
- X. Adjourn (1:30)

ATTACHMENT 2

Proposed corrections to the minutes of the November 9, 2011 JLC meeting

Make the following corrections on Page 9

Review and adopt changes to JLC Constitution & Bylaws

Mr. Robert Fairchild reviewed the proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws (*Attachment 8 and 9*).

Mr. Townsley made a **motion, seconded** by Mr. Abe Zino, that one additional change be made on top of those proposed by Mr. Fairchild: By-Laws, **~~Page 2, Item 4, Assistant Legislative Officer~~ Page 3, Item 2, Line 4 (Legislative Objectives Committee paragraph):** add *and co-sponsors* **after the word “Sponsors.”** The additional change to the By-Laws was approved **unanimously**.

With the corrections, the item would read:

1. Legislative Objectives Committee. The purpose of the Legislative Objectives Committee is to promote the annual legislative agenda of the JLC and to perform other legislative duties as directed by the JLC Chair. Members shall be appointed to this committee by the JLC Chair to work under the leadership of the Legislative Officer. Sponsors and co-sponsors of legislative objectives shall be members of the Legislative Objectives Committee. If approved by the JLC, the Legislative Officer may appoint additional members to the committee.

ATTACHMENT 3

Slide 1

JLC, BVS, and other Budget and Legislative Initiatives proposed by Governor Bob McDonnell for the 2012 General Assembly

December 20, 2011

Slide 2 - Overview

- JLC Recommendations – 2012 General Assembly
- BVS Recommendations – 2012 General Assembly
- Other Initiatives
- Summary

Slide 3 - JLC Recommendation 1 Veterans Identification

- JLC recommended that the Governor and General Assembly enact legislation that would authorize a veterans designator on Virginia Drivers Licenses
- Not feasible due to Real ID and other federal requirements
- Governor McDonnell has proposed an administrative solution
- DMV will create separate Virginia Veterans ID Card
- DMV Commissioner Rick Holcomb will provide additional details

Slide 4 - JLC Recommendation 2 Unclaimed Cremains

- JLC recommended that the Governor propose legislation requiring funeral homes to provide the names of unclaimed cremains to DVS
- Governor McDonnell will recommend legislation

Slide 5 - JLC Recommendation 3 Sales Tax Exemption for 501(c)(19) VSOs

- JLC recommended that the Governor and General Assembly establish a sales and use tax exemption for 501(c)(19) VSOs
- Governor McDonnell will not support this recommendation because:
 - It is revenue reducing
 - The lost revenue would have to be made up somehow, likely by taking it from other veterans programs
- The Governor's staff has spoken to legislative leaders on this, and they feel the same.
- Governor's office and legislative leaders suggest that this issue may fare better when

there is expected budget surplus

Slide 6 - JLC Recommendation 4 Homeless Veterans

- JLC recommended that the Governor implement as many strategies (to reduce/prevent homelessness among veterans) identified by JLARC as state fiscal resources will allow
- Governor McDonnell has recommended 2 new positions and \$197,018 per fiscal year
- The new Homeless Veterans Coordinators will help build local coalitions and continuums of care to provide veterans access to available resources, including housing vouchers, employment support, and social services

Slide 7 - BVS Recommendation 1 Delivery of Benefit Services

- BVS recommended that the Governor (i) propose legislation changing the ratio of DVS claims agents to Veterans to one claims agent for every 23,000 Veterans; and (ii) provide an additional four positions and \$350,000
- Governor McDonnell has recommended 2 new positions and \$127,068 per fiscal year
- The Governor has also recommended \$128,068 per fiscal year to fill two vacant unfunded positions, which will enable DVS to partner with DMAS to identify Virginia veterans receiving Medicaid benefits, and to determine if they are eligible for VA benefits and medical care

Slide 8 - BVS Recommendation 2 Education Section Staffing

- BVS recommended that the Governor's budget include two additional positions for the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training
- Governor McDonnell has recommended transferring two unfunded positions between DVS service areas

Slide 9 - BVS Recommendation 3 Care Center Staffing

- BVS recommended that the Governor's budget proposal include an authorization for 51 additional positions and \$2,700,000 additional appropriation in FY13 for the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center addition
- Governor McDonnell's proposed budget includes:
 - 51 additional positions;
 - \$2.7 million in FY13; and
 - \$3.6 million in FY14

Slide 10 - BVS Recommendation 4 Hampton Care Center Study

- BVS recommended that the Governor re-appropriate up to \$300,000 for DVS to use in FY12 for a pre-planning for the Hampton Roads Veterans Care Center
- Governor McDonnell will re-appropriate \$250,000 for study

Slide 11 - Other Initiatives

- Governor McDonnell will propose legislation
 - To move the Virginia War Memorial under DVS;
 - Separate the disabled veteran hunting and fishing licenses
 - Waive the one-year residency requirement for Guardsmen to qualify for in-state tuition (residency waiver)
 - Improve access to absentee ballots for military members serving overseas
- Governor McDonnell's proposed budget would also transfer one position between DVS service areas, which will allow Virginia Wounded Warrior Program to hire a full-time Director for the Virginia Veterans Corps (AmeriCorps grant)

Slide 12 - Proposed Budget Savings

Governor McDonnell has proposed budget savings by:

1. Delaying equipment replacement at veterans cemeteries (\$22,593) per FY
2. Eliminating the County Veterans Service Officer Liaison Program (\$82,306) per FY
3. Eliminating funding for the special projects coordinator wage position (\$20,000) per FY
4. Reduce printing and PR expenses at the Virginia War Memorial (\$14,905) per FY

ATTACHMENT 4

JLC Legislative Procedures Committee Recommendation 6 (as it applies to the General Assembly)

Recommendation: Maintain a bright, clear line between the JLC initiatives and other veteran-related legislative/budget initiatives.

JLC works as a body to adopt a specific set of recommendations. The process takes a considerable period of time. Because of the JLC's deliberative process, the JLC is not set up to take a specific position on budget items or legislation not recommended by the JLC and selected by the Governor for General Assembly legislation.

It is the JLC's responsibility to advocate those JLC initiatives which the Governor has had drafted into proposed legislation.

It is the JLC sponsor's responsibility to:

1. Work with the patron on any issues that arise regarding the proposed legislation in the form of a bill;
2. Be available to appear before legislative committees and sub-committees in Richmond (i.e., should live in close proximity);
3. Coordinate obtaining co-patrons;
4. Assist with modifications to the legislation as may be required; and
5. Maintain constant contact with DVS appointed staff regarding progress, changes, problems encountered.

The JLC and its members can express a broad/general support for legislation/budget items that support Virginia veterans that are not contrary to the Governor's legislation and budget initiatives as specified in his annual budget.

VSOs should respect JLC objectives that have been selected by the Governor and not take contrary positions. VSOs may have additional legislative objectives, but they should not take priority over Governor-approved JLC objectives. The principles of maintaining JLC Unity as unanimously approved by the JLC members apply as follows:

1. VSO membership in the JLC is voluntary;
2. JLC cannot direct VSOs to conform with its position on its objectives;
3. By a VSO's membership in the JLC and initial support for JLC objectives, the VSO agrees to support the objectives;
4. It is not in the best interest of either the JLC or the VSO to break their relationship over one point of disagreement;
5. It is in the best interest of the JLC and VSO to make every effort to obtain a satisfactory solution to the matter quietly and informally;
6. The proper and tactful handling of the case is of prime importance;
7. Some form of mutual agreement should be the goal of both the JLC and the VSO.

ATTACHMENT 5

JLC Legislative Procedures Committee Patron Recommendation Process

Terminology:

- A **patron** is a legislator who introduces a piece of legislation; a bill.
- A **co-patron** is a legislator who wishes to publicly endorse a bill.
- A **sponsor** is an individual, group, organization that suggests and supports a bill.

Recommendation Criteria:

- For veterans legislation, patrons from both sides of the aisle are normally recommended based on the following criteria:
 - Has a demonstrated, positive interest in veterans issues.
 - Has volunteered to carry a specific piece of legislation.
 - Is a member of the committee and subcommittee in the house of origin in which the legislation likely will be heard.
- If not a committee member, has un-conflicted time to pursue the legislation.
- Has not maxed-out the number of bills they can submit.
- If a patron from one side of the aisle in the house of origin is a prospective recommended selectee, a patron from the other side of the aisle in the other house is an appropriate recommended selectee.
- For patrons recommended to the Governor, there should be two nominated from each house who are on opposite sides of the aisle in each house.

Recommendation/Selection Process:

- Traditionally, agencies and boards have been offered the opportunity to recommend patrons to the Governor's office, and, if given the opportunity to do so this year, DVS, in consultation with the sponsors and the JLC and BVS Chairs, will recommend patrons at the appropriate time.
- After an agency/board recommendation has been approved by the Governor, the Governor or a member of his staff (which could include Commissioner Galanti, Steve Combs, or Jack Hilgers, if asked to do so by the Governor's office) will approach a member of the General Assembly and ask him/her to serve as a patron.

- The decision on which members are approached is made by the Governor/Governor's office. Sponsors may approach patrons after the Governor has approved to legislator as a patron.
- The selection of co-patrons is a separate process that occurs after the patron is selected.

ATTACHMENT 6

BOARD OF VETERANS SERVICES REPORT TO THE JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

December 20, 2011

The Board of Veterans Services (BVS) met on November 16. The next Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 9, 2012.

The Board has received and reviewed the JLC Chair's 2011 Annual Report and sincerely thanks the JLC for its outstanding work on behalf of Virginia's veterans.

In response to Executive Order 29 (EO29), the BVS submitted six recommendations for consideration by Governor McDonnell. Below is a summary of those recommendations and the Governor's proposed actions:

Recommendation 1 – Delivery of Benefit Services: Improve the delivery of benefit services to Virginia veterans by (i) changing the ratio of Department of Veterans Services (DVS) claims agents to veterans to one claims agent for every 23,000 veterans; and (ii) providing an additional four GF positions and \$350,000 (GF) to meet the new Code requirement and address other shortfalls.

Governor's proposal: Governor McDonnell's proposed budget includes two new positions and \$127,068 per fiscal year. The Governor's budget also includes \$128,068 per fiscal year to fill two vacant unfunded positions, which will enable DVS to partner with the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) to identify Virginia veterans receiving Medicaid benefits, and to determine if they are eligible for VA benefits and medical care

Recommendation 2 – Education Services Staffing: Ensure that the Education Services Section of the Department of Veterans Services has the necessary resources to meet its new mission under the Post 9/11 GI Bill Improvement Act by providing two additional NGF positions.

Governor's proposal: Governor McDonnell's budget transfers two unfunded positions between DVS service areas

Recommendation 3 – Care Center Staffing: Ensure that state veterans care centers have the resources to deliver quality care to residents by providing an additional 51 NGF positions and \$2,700,000 additional NGF appropriation in FY13, to reflect the opening of the 40-bed addition to the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center.

Governor's proposal: Governor McDonnell's proposed budget includes:

- 51 additional positions;

- \$2.7 million in FY13; and
- \$3.6 million in FY14

Recommendation 4 – Hampton Veterans Care Center Pre-Planning Study: Ensure that a viable and appropriate site is selected for the construction of the Hampton Roads Veterans Care Center by re-appropriating up to \$300,000 (GF) from FY11 to FY12 for a pre-planning study.

Governor's proposal: Governor McDonnell will re-appropriate \$250,000 for the study

Recommendation 5 – Voting Status of Ex Officio Members of the Board of Veterans Services: Strengthen the capacity of the Board of Veterans Services to fulfill the Powers and Duties set forth in the Code of Virginia by granting voting privileges to all *ex officio* members.

Governor's proposal: Governor McDonnell will propose legislation granting voting privileges to all *ex officio* members of the Board of Veterans Services

Recommendation 6 – Additional Citizen Board Members: Strengthen the capacity of the Board of Veterans Services to fulfill the Powers and Duties set forth in the Code of Virginia by increasing the number of citizen board members from 11 to 15.

Governor's proposal: Governor McDonnell will not support this recommendation

Thanks to the outstanding support of the JLC, the Governor has adopted five of the six recommendations submitted by the BVS. Please accept our sincere thanks.

Respectfully submitted,

Thad A. Jones, Chairman

ATTACHMENT 7

VETERANS SERVICES FOUNDATION REPORT TO Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations December 20, 2011

The Veterans Services Foundation (VSF) Board of Trustees has not met since November 2, 2011.

As of December 15, 2011, the Foundation has raised OVER \$111,000 of which \$104,000 is for VWWP. That does not count about \$5,000 in pledges that have been received and may be collected by the end of 2011. Significant contributors and others are noted on the attached statement.

As reported at the last JLC meeting, the next Foundation Board meeting is scheduled for sometime in March 2012 after the General Assembly adjourns. Its location is to be determined. Items for the next meeting may include: (1) approve the 2nd Quarter FY11 Fund Statement; (2) review VSF FY12 fundraising program; (3) consider recommendations for a VSF logo; and (4) approve and budget adjustments which may be proposed. There will be Finance and Development Committee meetings before the next VSF Board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

David Holt
VSF Chairman

Attachment (1)

VSF FUNDRAISING RESULTS FOR FY12*

Unaudited

December 16, 2011 Updated

Income

VWWP

Dominion Resources	25,000.00
Soc Gov Mtng Prof	13,482.00
Marshall Ch. MOAA	12,500.00
Lakeview Golf Club	10,221.08
Bosh Global Services	7,400.00
American Legion Post 146	6,132.00
Achievable Dream	5,000.00
Mar Corps League Ch.	4,197.65
Cavalier Golf & Yacht Cl.	3,322.31
Marriott (SGMP)	3,000.00
Richmond Ch. MOAA	2,000.00
WSIG Radio	1,901.00
Texas Roadhouse	1,600.00
American Legion Post 89	1,500.00
Other VSO's**	1,335.00
Sgt Petty Poker Run	1,189.50
Individual Donors	<u>4,226.58</u>

VWWP Revenue Balance 104,007.12

Amelia Cemetery 1,615.00

Horton Cemetery 3,875.00

Dublin Cemetery 1,000.00

Homeless Veterans Fund 200.00

Foundation Endowment 825.00

Non-VWWP Total 7,515.00

Total FY12 Income to Date 111,522.12

*Does not include Care Centers, Grants, or Interest

**American Legion Posts, MOAA Chapters, DAV Aux Unit, VFW Post Aux

ATTACHMENT 8

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES REPORT TO JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS December 20, 2011

Highlights of current operations

- ***Benefit Services: assists Virginia's veterans and their dependents in obtaining benefits to which they are entitled under federal, state, and local laws***
 - New offices open in Alexandria and Virginia Beach
 - New training coordinator hired – regional training meetings being held
 - Governor has proposed two new claims agent positions
 - Governor has also approved funding to fill two positions that are currently unfunded
- ***State Approving Agency for Veterans Education and Training: the only organization in Virginia that approves educational programs so veterans and their dependents may receive their educational benefits***
 - New compliance oversight mission – greatly increased workload for staff
 - Part-time administrative assistant hired to help meet increased workload
 - Governor has proposed shifting two positions from the care centers to SAA to help meet the increased workload
 - Over 51,000 GI Bill students in 2011
- ***Virginia Veterans Care Centers: provide long-term care and short-term rehabilitation to Virginia's veterans***
 - Design work proceeding on the 40-bed addition to the Sitter & Barfoot Veterans Care Center
 - Governor has proposed additional positions and appropriation for operating the new wing
 - Several renovation projects ongoing at Virginia Veterans Care Center, including parking lot expansion and road work
- ***Virginia Veterans Cemeteries: Virginia's veterans cemeteries are shrines commemorating the personal sacrifice of those who served and those who stand ready to defend our freedom***
 - Thanks to the outstanding work of the Horton Wreath Society, a wreath was placed on every grave at the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery on December 10
 - All cemetery positions now filled

- **Virginia Wounded Warrior Program:** *provides behavioral health, rehabilitation services, and support to veterans, National Guard members, reservists, and their family members*
 - All Regional Director positions now filled
 - Governor has proposed transferring one position from administration to VWWP, which will allow VWWP to hire a full-time director for the Virginia Veterans Corps
- **Human Resources**
 - Cemeteries, SAA, and VWWP are fully staffed to current manning levels
 - Benefits has four vacant positions
 - Claims agent – Big Stone Gap
 - Claims administrator – McGuire VA Medical Center and Hampton
 - County Veterans Service Officer Liaison – the Governor has proposed eliminating this position. DVS will leave this position unfilled.
 - Administration has one vacant positions – HR Assistant
 - Two positions in administration will be converted from part-time to full-time
 - Administrative assistant
 - Development director

I cannot thank the JLC members enough for their continued support of Virginia Veterans and the Department of Veterans Services.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul E. Galanti
Commissioner

ATTACHMENT 9

To: Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (the JLC)

Subject: Virginia Council for the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children Meeting

Date: 8 December 2011

Location: Jefferson Conference Room, 22nd Floor, James Monroe Building, 101 N14th Street., Richmond, Virginia

1. Council Members in Attendance:

Senator John C. Miller, Chairman
Dr. Patricia I. Wright
Mr. James S. Lander
Dr. James G. Merrill,
Dr. Winston O. Odom
Dr. William C. Boshier, Jr.

2. Council Members Not in Attendance:

The Honorable M. Kirkland Cox, House of Delegates

3. Department of Education Staff in Attendance:

Anne Wescott, Assistant Superintendent for Policy and Communications,
Virginia Department of Education
Michelle Vucci, Director of Policy, Virginia Department of Education

4. Senator Miller opened the meeting by welcoming the Council members and guests. Paul Nichols, President and Chief Executive Officer of Virginia Advanced Study Strategies, provided the members with an overview of the National Military Project of the National Math and Science Initiative. The program seeks to increase the number of military students taking and passing AP math, science, and English exams, and expands access to traditionally under-represented students, including schools with high concentrations of military students. The initiative is currently partnering with 12 Virginia high schools. Senator Miller asked what the Commonwealth can do to be more involved. Mr. Nichols responded that the most important thing is continuing to build partnerships with businesses and private and public organizations. More information about the initiative is available at:

<http://www.virginiaadvancedstudystategies.org/PRESS%20RELEASE.pdf>.

5. Elizabeth Mancano, Military Families Liaison in the Office of the First Lady of Virginia, provided the members with an overview of the “Serving our Service Member Families” Initiative (SOS). The SOS partnership network connects military families with businesses, churches, and civic and volunteer organizations to meet their needs while a service member is away on duty or wounded while serving. Ms. Mancano guided members through the SOS Web site

(www.sos.virginia.gov) where military family members can connect with service providers.

6. Melissa Luchau, Military Family Education Liaison at the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), briefed members on several policy and legislative issues related to the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. She provided an overview of a recent guidance document issued by the Department, on behalf of the Council. The guidance document stated that a prospective kindergarten student, who falls under the provisions of the compact, who has not yet started kindergarten prior to transferring to Virginia, but who is eligible for enrollment in the sending state, must have registered with the local education agency (LEA) in the sending state in order to be eligible for enrollment in kindergarten after the parental military transfer to Virginia regardless of age under Article IV, Section D of the compact. The guidance was issued after an advisory opinion was issued by the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3) in February 2011.

7. Senator Miller asked if the kindergarten guidance information is available to Military parents in other states. Ms. Luchau responded that the information posted on the VDOE Web site (http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/military/index.shtml) has been disseminated to school divisions across the Commonwealth, and has been provided to School Liaison Officers. Dr. Boshier asked for clarification on how a non-military student would be treated in a similar circumstance, and Dr. Wright responded that any school division can enroll a younger student with pre-assessments, at the division's discretion. Dr. Browder asked for clarification that this guidance is only applicable to state operated facilities. Ms. Luchau responded that the provisions of the compact only apply to local education agencies as defined in the compact.

8. Ms. Luchau also notified the members about two proposed rule changes the MIC3 will consider at their fall meeting. The first proposal relates to the dues formula for states; it clarifies that the dues are based on where a military child "resides" and it sets a ceiling and a floor amount for dues. The second proposal relates to enrollment in kindergarten. The proposed rule change would require a student to have attended class for at least one day in the sending state in order to continue enrollment in kindergarten in the receiving state, if they do not otherwise meet the receiving state's age requirement for enrollment. The two proposed rule changes will be posted on the MIC3 Web site (www.mic3.net) for public comment at least 30 days before the MIC3 meeting in November

2011. The Web site will include the exact language of the proposed rule changes as well as formal justifications for the changes.

During the discussion of the second proposed rule change, Professor Bremseth raised concerns that there is no clear reasoning for such a change in policy and that it would adversely impact military families who often move in the summer. Dr. Boshier raised concerns about the inconsistency of the proposed rule change with the advisory opinion previously issued by MIC3, and asked if this issue could be related to compulsory attendance. Dr. Wright noted that enrollment is not the same thing as attendance, and that she has no plans to retract the guidance issued by the Department earlier this year.

9. Dr. Merrill made a motion to support the MIC3 advisory opinion issued on

kindergarten enrollment in February, which provided that a prospective kindergarten student who has not yet started kindergarten prior to transferring, but who is eligible for enrollment in the sending state, must have registered with the LEA in the sending state in order to be eligible for enrollment in kindergarten after the parental military transfer regardless of age under Article IV, Section D of the compact. The motion noted that the guidance issued by MIC3 and subsequently VDOE has worked well in Virginia. The motion also noted that there is no need for adding an attendance requirement. Professor

Bremseth seconded the motion and the motion passed with unanimous support.

10. Ms. Luchau also presented a legislative proposal to the members of the Council related to special power of attorney. The purpose of the proposal is to make two provisions of the Code consistent, with regards to special power of attorney. Both § 22.1-3 and § 22.1-360 of the Code specify that special power of attorney, relative to the guardianship of a child of a military family, and executed under Title 10, United States Code, § 1044b, is sufficient for the purposes of enrollment and all other actions requiring parental participation and consent. However, there is inconsistency regarding the deployment status of the parent. Section 22.1-3 of the Code references a parent deployed outside the United States, and the language in § 22.1-360 does not specify that the parent

is deployed at all. The legislation is needed to provide that when service members execute a special power of attorney it is sufficient for the purposes of enrollment and attending school free of tuition, regardless of the parent's deployment status.

11. Dr. Boshier noted his support for the legislative proposal as it would assist military families. Professor Bremseth asked for clarification on when tuition is required and noted that military orders should be enough to satisfy enrollment requirements. Ms. Luchau clarified that for non-military students, local school divisions can charge tuition to out of division students, and that it is customary for service members to complete a special power of attorney, for reasons other than just school purposes. Senator Miller noted the Council's general support for the proposal, which will make it easier for military families to transition schools.

12. Senator Miller provided an update on Virginia High School League (VHSL) rules that may affect military families. VHSL's transfer rule currently prohibits students from participating in VHSL activities for the first 365 days following transfer to a school, unless the transfer corresponds to the family's move into the attendance zone. Senator Miller notified the members that the VHSL will consider a proposal at their December meeting to grant immediate eligibility to students transferring into a school division to live with a relative or guardian due to a military deployment.

13. The Council then received public comment from one member of the audience. The commenter presented the members with copies of a Government Accountability Office Report, "Education of Military Dependent Students: Better Information Needed to Assess Student Performance." The report examined what is known about the utilization and effectiveness of DOD Impact Aid funds, the challenges faced by school districts in serving military dependent students, and how DOD and Education have collaborated on their assistance.

14. Dr. Boshier noted his concern about a recent report showing the majority of the Department

of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) schools worldwide have aged beyond repair and many others require significant upgrades.

15. Senator Miller closed the meeting by thanking the Council members. He stated that the next Council meeting date will be on February 5, 2012 in Richmond.

16. Presentation materials from the meeting can be found at:
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_family/military/va_council/index.shtml.

The Virginia Council on the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (Virginia Council) was formed to assist in easing the transition of the children of military families into school as a result of frequent moves and deployment of their parents. Created by the 2009 General Assembly, Virginia joins other states participating in the compact. I was honored to represent the JLC at this meeting at the request of Chairwoman Jenny Holbert and Steve Combs.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chip Moran
Thomas “Chip” Moran
JLC – NAUS Representative

ATTACHMENT 10

Veterans Remembered Flag

Information taken from <http://veteransrememberedflag.com> on November 8, 2011



Home Page

As we all know, there is our great American Flag and one celebrating each of the five branches of our great military - the Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and Air Force - and even one that pays homage to our missing in action and prisoners of war. But where is the emblem or Flag to honor the largest contingency of military people, our Veterans, both living and deceased? We, the Sonoma Veterans Memorial Park Association, are trying very hard to rectify this omission. We have created a beautiful Flag to do just that. Please help us accomplish our goal by sharing this message with your relatives and friends as well as your state and national legislators.

Our web page is: "veteransrememberedflag.com".

Thank you,

James L. Parks, Honorary Chairman
Sonoma Veterans Memorial Park Association

The Meaning of the Flag

The Flag depicts the founding of our nation by the thirteen stars that emanate from the hoist to the large red star that represents our Nation and the five branches of our country's military that defend her.

The white star indicates the Veteran's dedication to service.

The blue star honors all who serve in the military in the past, present, and future.

The gold star memorializes those who fell defending our Nation.

The green field represents the hallowed ground where all rest eternally

ATTACHMENT 11

JLC 2012 Action Plan

January 12 Conference at the General Assembly

- Advocate for 2011-2012 JLC Initiatives
- Promote role of JLC, DVS, etc.

March 28 meeting

- 2012 General Assembly review
- Look ahead to 2013 General Assembly: initial review and discussion of potential 2012-2013 JLC Initiatives
- Report of the Constitution and By-Laws Review Committee (annual review)
- Review of past JLC initiatives and current status.

NLT May 1

- JLC members submit potential 2012-2013 JLC Initiatives for discussion at May 23 meeting. NOTE: Must be in JLC Position Paper format
- Potential 2012-2013 JLC Initiatives distributed to JLC members for review
- JLC members share potential 2012-2013 JLC Initiatives with their VSO leadership and others in their VSO to solicit feedback, concerns, additional ideas, etc.

May 23 meeting

- Continued review and discussion of potential 2012-2013 JLC Initiatives
- Appoint Nominating Committee

NLT June 20

- JLC members submit potential 2012-2013 JLC Initiatives for discussion at July 11 meeting. NOTE: Must be in JLC Position Paper format
- Potential initiatives distributed to JLC members for review
- JLC members share potential 2012-2013 JLC Initiatives with their VSO leadership and others in their VSO to solicit feedback, concerns, additional ideas, etc.

Before July 11 meeting

- New JLC member orientation (after July 11 meeting if necessary)

July 11 meeting

- Review and discuss all proposed 2012-2013 JLC Initiatives
- Vote on and categorize 2012-2013 JLC Initiatives
- Appoint JLC sponsors
- Elect Chair and Vice Chair
- Appoint Legislative Officer, form Legislative Operations Committee

NLT August 15

- Legislative Operations Committee meets to finalize Position Papers and FAQ Sheets
- Distribute Position Papers and FAQ Sheets to JLC and post on JLC website
- Submit Executive Order 29 (EO29) recommendations to Governor McDonnell through DVS

September/October

- Chair and Legislative Officer meet with Governor
- JLC Chair appoints JLC Appointed Officers (who will serve in an acting capacity until approved by the Council)

October 17 meeting

- Report on the meeting with the Governor
- Legislative Operations Committee recommends General Assembly Patrons for the JLC to recommend to the Governor
- Prepare for meetings with General Assembly members
- Approve JLC Appointed Officers for 2012-2013

October/November/December

- Submit recommended patrons to Governor McDonnell through DVS
- Meet with General Assembly members
- Hold legislative forums

December 19 or 20 meeting

- Review Governor's Proposed Budget
- Report on General Assembly Patrons
- Plan for 2013 Conference at the General Assembly
- Adopt 2013 meeting schedule
- Adopt 2013 Action Plan